

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested. Claims 1 and 4 remain active in this application. Claims 2 and 3 have been canceled.

Rejection under 35 USC 112

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In regard to claim 1, applicants have canceled "it" and now refer to "the shell". In regard to claims 2 and 3, these claims have been canceled, rendering this part of the rejection moot. In regard to claim 4, antecedent basis for the "centers" has now been added to claim 1. Accordingly, this rejection is now overcome.

Rejection under 35 USC 102

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Jeanroy et al. (US patent 6474161). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In regard to claim 1, the examiner states that the reference shows a shell 14 having a pole held by a support rod 12 and an annular edge. The examiner further states that the inside edge and the outside surface are offset relative to each other along the axis of revolution so that the shell presents a thickness along the edge that is greater than in the vicinity of the pole.

First, applicants wish to point out that the reference has a common inventor with the present application and was assigned to the same assignee as the present application. The reference also is the US equivalent of the French document described on page 1, line 32 of the present application.

In figure 3 of the reference, a structure is shown where the thickness of the shell is uniform. As pointed out by the examiner, figure 5 shows a variation of this device where the thickness of the shell is made greater at the lower edge. However, the remaining portion of the shell remains uniform. The present invention differs from this arrangement in that the thickness of the shell increases along the entire length of the surface and that the inner and outer surfaces are defined as hemispheres having centers that are not the same. In particular, one center lies above the plane P, while the other center lies below the plane.

These differences are now brought out in amended claim 1 which describes the two centers as being offset relative to each other along the axis of revolution. The surfaces also have a different radii. This arrangement is clearly not seen in the reference. The use of two offset hemispheres allows each surface to be more easily machined as opposed to the reference where a special form is used in the area of increased thickness. In view of this, applicants submit that claim 1 is not anticipated by the reference.

Claim 4 depends from claim 1 and as such is also considered to be allowable. In addition, claim 4 recites that the centers extend on either side of the plane P. This is clearly not seen in the reference where the centers of the two surfaces are the same point.

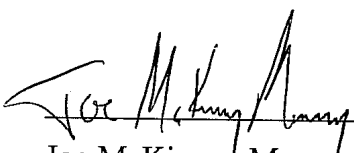
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3828 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; in particular, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,


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